

# HOUSE & GARDEN

A. E. MARTY.



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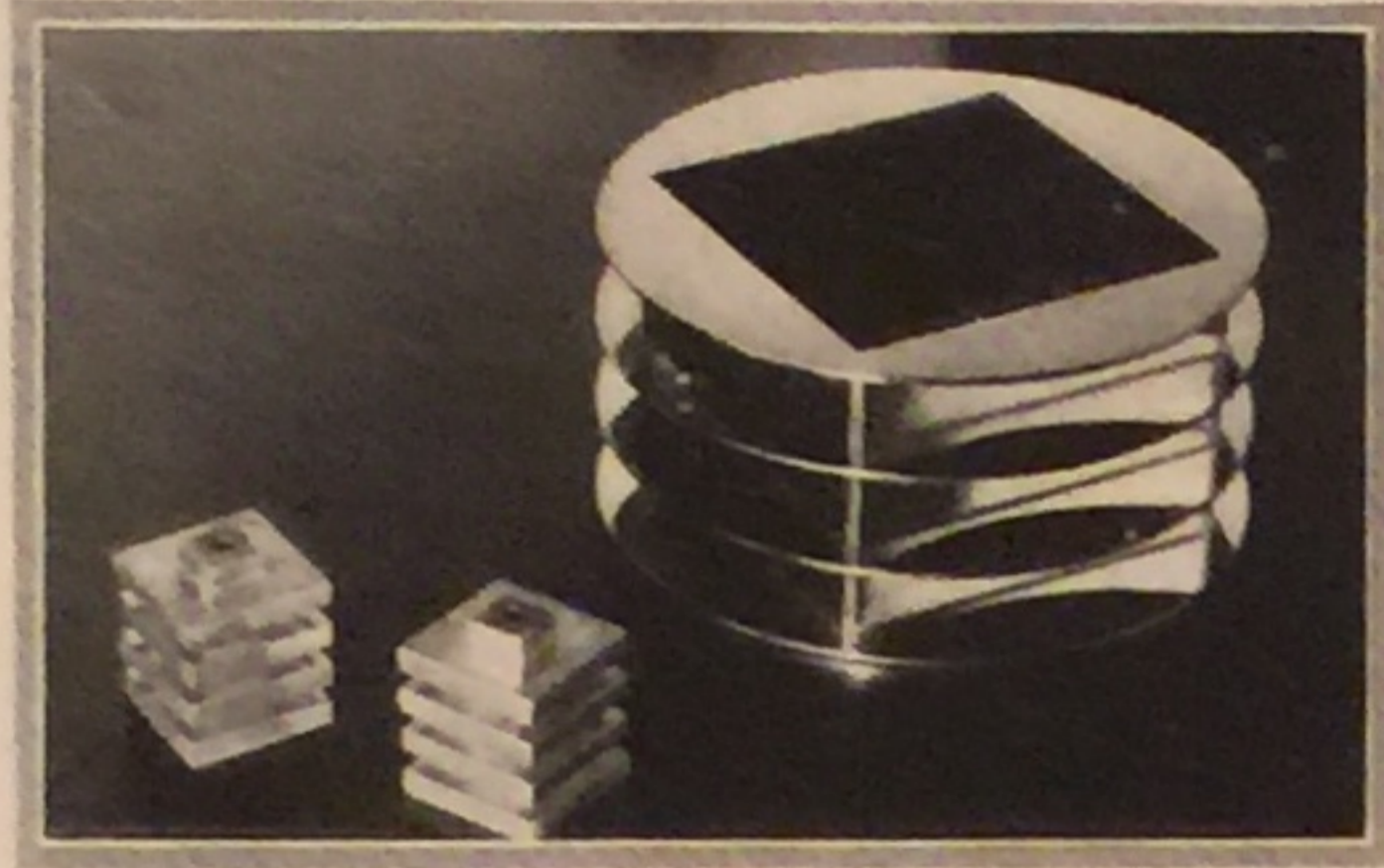
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*Price 35 Cents*

## New Metal Furniture For Modern Schemes

**Louise Bonney**

(Below) Interesting lines and proportions mark both the round ash tray of chromium plated brass and the square aluminum curtain pulls. Designed by William Lescaze



The card table shown above accommodates six people when opened for dining. The base is made of rectangular bronze tubing plated with chromium, polished, and the top may be had in black or colored bakelite. Gilbert Rohde



Dana B. Merrill

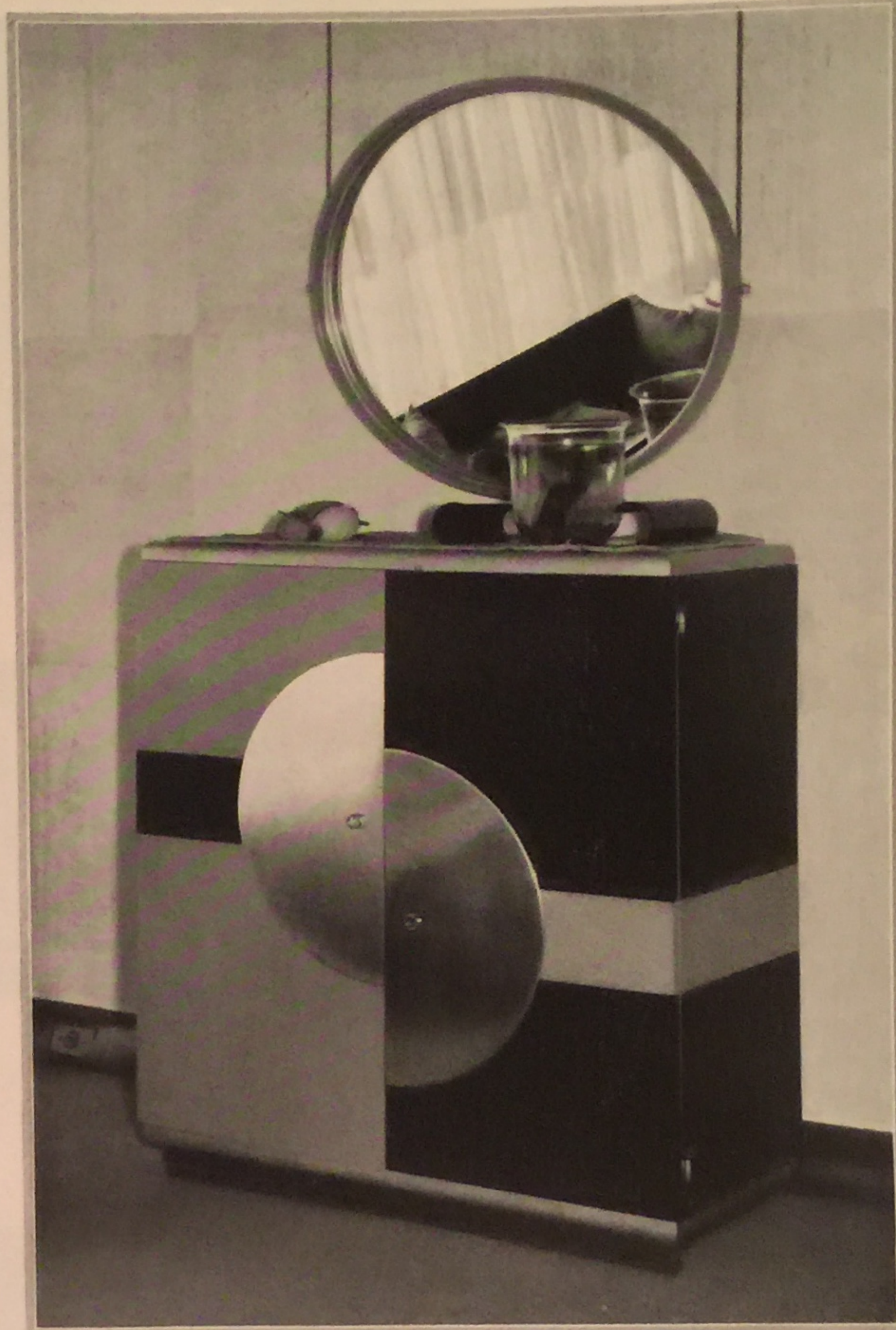
IN the French *Art et Décoration*, the following quotation appeared during 1927, "In railroad cars and automobiles metal has progressively eliminated wood. Perhaps one day not too far distant the same thing will happen to the furniture of our houses." Two years later this suggestion became a forceful fact with the exhibiting of metal furniture ensembles by several of the major figures in the French decorative world—Le Corbusier, Djo Bourgeois, Pierre Chareau, René Herbst, Louis Sognot, and of wood and metal furniture by a half-dozen others. This season sees several artist-decorators in America offering programs of metal furniture—which seem to imply, steel for the skyscraper, why not for the table? Aluminum for airplanes, why not for chairs? Chromium for the motor lamp, why not for the bed? After all, designers of interior furnishings cannot live in this mechanistic age without feeling the presence of metal in the warp and woof of their lives; cannot ride about in shining motors and gaze up at the aluminum spandrels of a Chrysler Building, or file by the slim beauty of an aluminum airplane or the spider web steel layers of a soaring skyscraper without thinking of the possibilities of these materials for the furnishings of our homes.

The practical dressing table shown at the left is of black enameled steel with chromium plated base and trimming. It is part of a modernist bedroom suite made entirely of metal and designed by Norman Bel Geddes for the Simmons Company

Even this artistic consciousness does not furnish an adequate explanation for the invasion of metal into present day interior decoration. This lies primarily in the merits of metal and its adaptability to our changed mode of living. Durability is the first advantage—a durability that withstands steam heat, changes of temperature, constant moving about and mechanical care in place of personal care. Wood, with all its beauty, demands a great deal of attention before it comes to you. It must be cut, assembled, sanded, stained, and finished by hours of work, all adding to its initial expense. Then when it becomes a part of a room, it has a disconcerting way of failing to adapt itself to its environment, to climatic changes and steam heat particularly. The beautiful patine caused by hours of loving labor must be treated tenderly. A casual cigarette, a moist glass, Johnny's hob-nails, the cat's claws, a temperamental vacuum in the hands of a temperamental maid—and you have to start all over again!

Consider now the advantages of metal. A corresponding piece of furniture is fabricated in two operations and will last indefinitely, since welding takes the place of glue in many cases, and impenetrable finish the place of sensitive polish. The bakelite top offers the resistance values of marble. The only blemish possible will be a slight scratch which can be pumiced off. So much for durability. What about comfort? Certainly no period has produced more comfortable seating arrangements than ours, from the motor car seat to the divan. There is no reason why the fundamentals of these—strong springs, soft cushions and right proportions, should not be translated into metal terms. There is absolutely nothing in the idea of modern design or materials which eliminates comfort.

Although the materials of the new metal furniture range through aluminum, steel,  
(Continued on page 142)



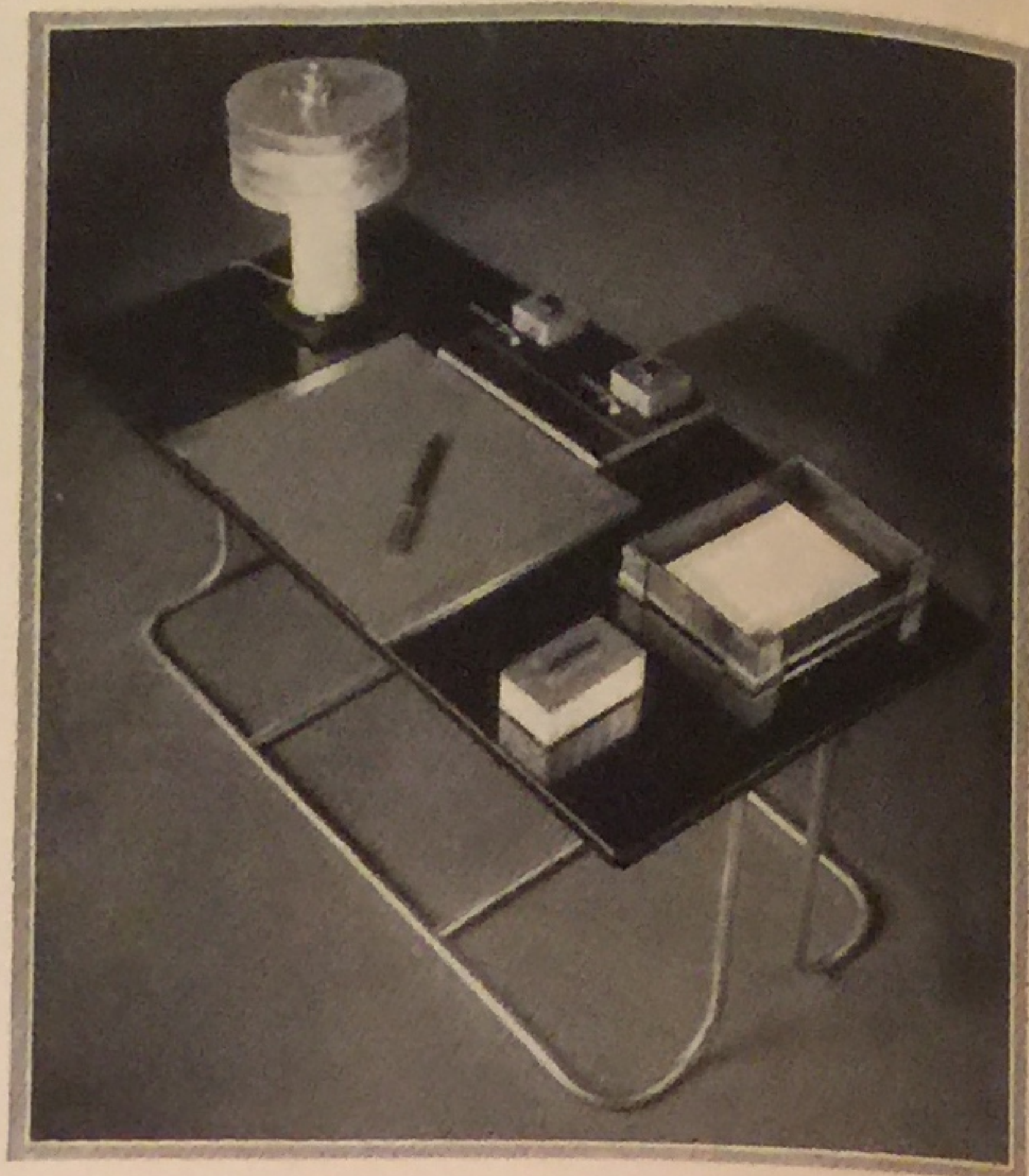
Emelle Danielson

(Above) Metal is used as decoration on this man's chest made of red and black lacquered wood ornamented with gold and silver plated metal discs. A band of silver leaf outlining the top of the chest and a border of gold leaf at the bottom effectively finish this piece, which has sliding trays of mahogany inside. It was designed by Paul T. Frankl



Waringer

Excellent for the hall, living room or dining room is this table which was designed by Donald Deskey. Brass bands serve for legs and two semi-circular hoops make the base. The top of brown bakelite is both durable and effective. The brass lamp, also designed by Deskey, has a simple parchment paper shade. Both pieces are from Lord & Taylor



Black bakelite and chromium desk set, and aluminum and glass lamp with direct and indirect lighting by Walter von Nessen. Bakelite topped table with metal tubing base. Designed by Deskey for Ypsilanti Company

## Furniture For Modern Schemes

(Continued from page 83)

brass and nickel as bases, with chromium, cadmium, gold and silver as platings, aluminum and chromium steel seem to be most popular today. Do not expect to find metal furniture at present much cheaper than wood because the production is still limited. But mass distribution will soon bring about the same difference that prevails today between a top-priced car and a cheap one.

The base material is used most frequently in its stock forms—tubing or bars. In the best designs it is worked into simple structural forms with continuing stream lines instead of halting joints, welding instead of glue. The finish can be bright or dull, but it should be honest. Metal simulating wood is a mongrel form, dishonest and unbeautiful.

For flat surfaces—table tops, chair-arms, etc., formica is most popular. This is a synthetic material resulting from the playful interactions of formaldehyde, paper and rosin, with great resistance qualities. It comes in colors as well as black. The upholstery should bring color and texture contrasts to the piece. Anything from rayon satin to velvet, may be used, from fabricated leather to calfskin, from printed linen to mohair, from tapestry to leather.

Where shall we go for well designed metal furniture? Owing to the popularity of metal as a material for furniture with leading modern designers in this country, the problem of purchasing it is not difficult. Howe & Lescaze, architects, have been particularly successful with metal and believe firmly in this medium for both architecture and decoration. Fireplaces, chairs, tables, curtain pulls, lamps and vases designed by this firm can be depended upon for sureness of line and appropriateness of detail. Walter von Nessen, a master in metal, whether his contribution is a lamp, chair, mirror or small accessory, is now working on a "limited edition" plan, making about fifty pieces from each design.

He has developed several practical ideas in illumination such as the lamp illustrated above which incorporates both direct and indirect lighting. Gilbert Rohde also works on the individual or limited edition piece, being particularly successful in creating original space-saving furniture for the small apartment.

Paul Frankl has believed for some time in an all metal formula for furniture and this season he uses metal to decorate lacquered wooden pieces with unique success. An illustration of metal used in this manner is the chest shown on page 83 where discs of metal, gold and silver-plated, bands of gold and silver leaf at top and bottom are striking notes against the black and red background.

Donald Deskey has proven himself the most prolific of metal designers so far—lamps, window display fixtures, chairs, tables, sofas, accessories and the present impressive mass production program of the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company, to mention a few of his achievements. His feeling for the materials of this age—vitriolite, bakelite, glass, metals—is sure and sympathetic.

Other sources for interesting metal furniture are Robert Locher, who designs exquisitely in metal and glass, Jules Bouy, Forzina, Park Avenue Galleries, Eugene Schoen and department stores handling some of the products of these designers as well as creating designs in their own studios, such as Lord & Taylor. And last but not significant are the two big stylized mass production programs of the Simmons Company and the Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company. For where Mr. Deskey has designed chairs, sofas and tables for living and dining rooms, Mr. Bel Geddes complements with beds, dressing tables, chairs and daybeds. The Aluminum Company of America also plans a production of its own for the home which will embody the best principles of modern design.

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of a June morning  
brought indoors >>



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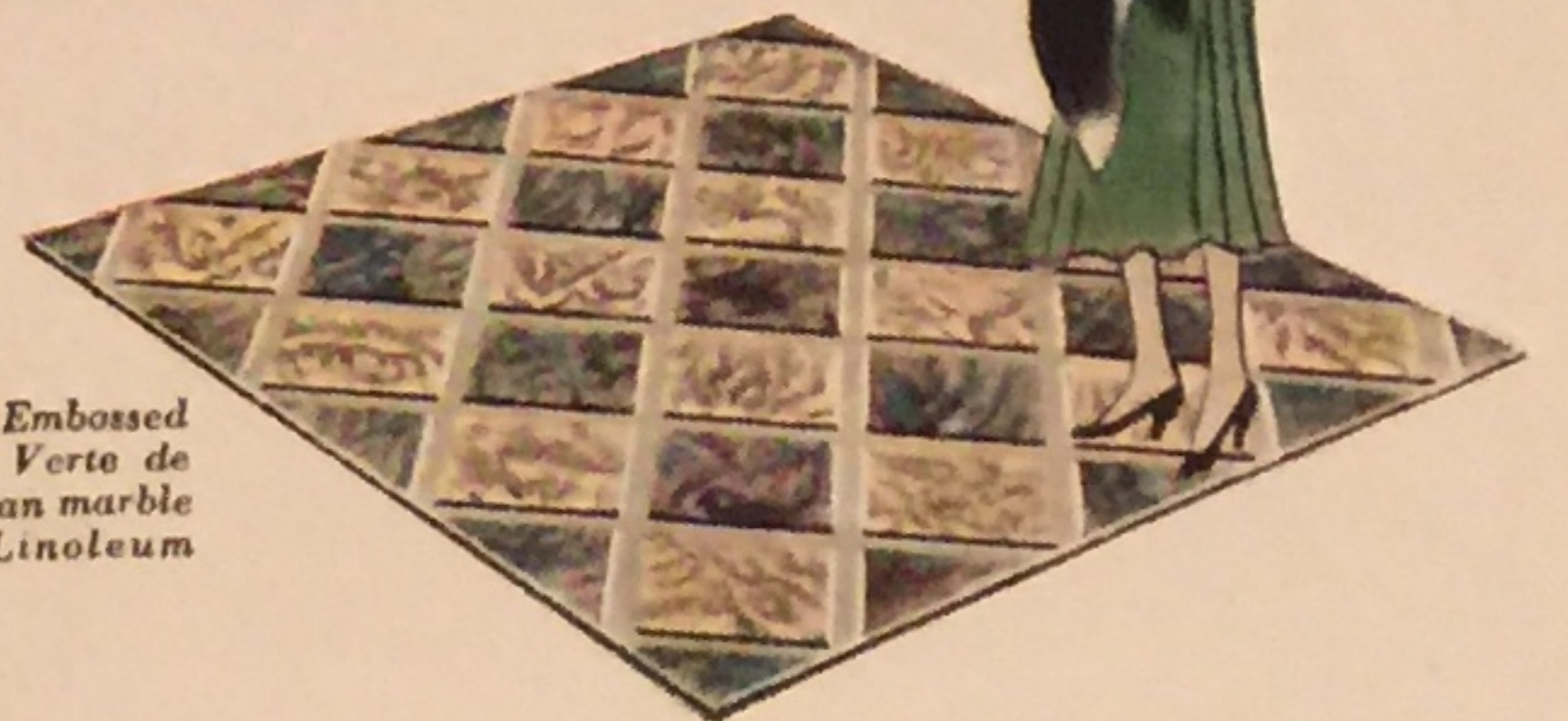
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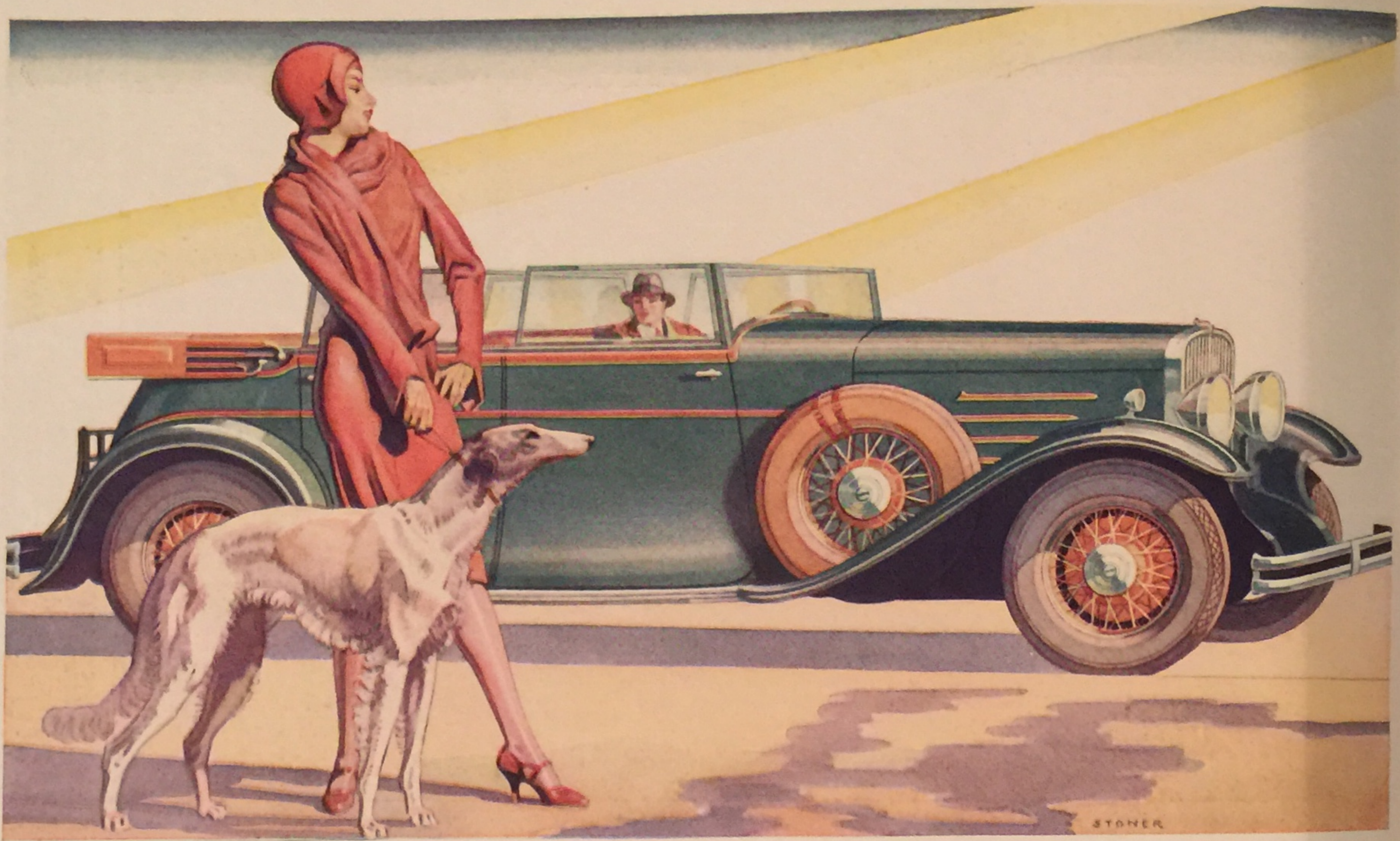


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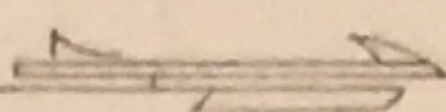
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